

THE UNJUST STEWARD.

Mr. Editor: If we study the context, I think we shall have no difficulty determining who are meant by the different characters referred to in the parable of the unjust steward. In the first place let us consider the conditions under which the parable was uttered. Christ had been associating upon terms of familiarity with publicans and sinners and was upbraided therefor by the scribes and Pharisees, who represented the orthodox Jewish sentiment of the time. Christ proceeded to justify himself in three parables. Then in others he proceeds to condemn *Hebly Israel* and, as I think, its great prototype, nominal Christianity.

The steward of unrighteousness therefore is Judaism or Hebrewism and its prototype, nominal Christianity. The lord is the human race, and the wealth is the present age of the world.

The Bible speaks of three worlds: The old world which was destroyed by water; the present evil world in which we live, and the world to come in which dwelleth righteousness.

Now this unjust steward was about to be repudiated at the time of our Savior by the world. Because he had been unfaithful and useless as he himself confesses unable to dig and too proud to beg, what does he do? He compromises with the individual, the debtor to humanity. He says to him: You do not owe every power of your life to the upbuilding of mankind. You only owe one half or at most four fifths of your energy to mankind, the lord. The remainder is your private property to be expended upon yourself in what manner selfishness may dictate. Strange to say the lord commanded the unjust steward for his shrewdness, and those individuals continued to support him.

Now we see nominal Christianity in almost the exact condition in which Judaism was found by Christ at his first advent. The unparalleled wave of mental activity had passed over Greece and left her a tottering skeptic, "doubting even if she doubted." This had been followed by the mammonism of Rome which had now engulfed the whole civilized world, demoralizing and degrading everything it touched, from the heartless, treacherous Parthian assassin to the High Priest at Jerusalem.

So now the great learning and its concomitant and inseparable skepticism of the Nineteenth Century have rolled over nominal Christianity and it is being followed by a dissolving, degrading, blasting mammonism such as Jugertha never saw and Horace never dreamed of in the most degraded and debauching days of falling Rome.

And the children of this world are wiser in their day and generation than the children of light. They are even now repudiating nominal Christianity and demanding of her an account of her stewardship for she has not conserved the great wealth entrusted to her care for the race but has squandered it and the children of light do not see it. No, they are blind and deaf, and nearer grows the thunder of that Niagara into which we are rushing to destruction.

It seems to me that even now we are a hilarious drunken crowd, rushing down the swift current of time which will soon hurl us over the precipice into the seething, death dealing current below.

And what is the unjust steward doing? He is doing as he did two thousand years ago. He can serve no useful purpose to humanity so he prolongs his time by unjust schemes, and he comes to you and to me with propositions to release us of some of our debts to humanity. This deluge of mammon has whelmed us all, and the unjust steward tells us that wealth is a good thing if properly used, and an honorable thing if honorably obtained; that we each owe something to ourselves and not all to humanity. The time is coming when he will say, as the old Latin poet, Horace, I think: "Get money, honestly if you can; but get it."

And then what? Yea, rather now what? Why, now may God have mercy upon us all for we have none upon ourselves.

NEW YORK CITY.

Some things that struck us on our recent trip.

On going to New York for the first time one does not find the place wholly strange to him. It is the best advertised place in the world and so much is written and so many pictures printed concerning the city that there is something strangely familiar to him when he first catches sight of the city from the ferryboat. The Pennsylvania railway trains run into the big depot at Jersey City. Here in the hurrying crowd I saw the familiar face of Mr. Nichols, the agent of W. R. Cole & Co., and felt that the world was not so big after all.

The ferryboats run their blunt noses right into this depot and you choose one of them according as you want to land in the city, up or down. Your ticket entitles you to be set over the river into New York, the railroad owning the ferries, and its tickets call for New York.

STREET CARS.

There are any number of horse car lines in New York yet, and in the busiest portions too. Years ago the franchises were picked up for little or nothing by enterprising men and they gather in the nickels by the bushel. Often when they discard horses for the cable or trolley system they break up, and many of the horse car lines have taken warning not to go too fast.

On the inside of the car was a sign: "Spitting on the floor of this car is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of \$500, or a year's imprisonment or both." This startled me, for spitting is the quickest thing in the world. Thought has been said to be the quickest thing in the world but many a man has spit before he thought. While turning over in my mind the terrible consequences if in a fit of abstraction, I might be guilty of the crime of expectation, I saw two laborers sitting opposite me relieve themselves of vast quantities of "amber" on the floor. No notice was taken of the incident.

POLITICS.

The best insight into the politics of the city was from a Tammany man by the name of Hon. Willis Burroughs, Secretary of the Society of the Sons of Africa, a Democratic club, numbering over 7000 negro voters. We were working together in the Mergenthaler Linotype factory in the instruction room.

His reason for supporting the Democrats was that the colored organizations received the same recognition in the filling of offices after a victory that the white voters did. Colored men went on in proportion to their voting strength the different jobs from street cleaners to assistant district attorneys.

Then at Christmas, Tammany had a quarter-ton of coal and a bushel of potatoes for every working man who wanted them. The man was not compelled to apply for these supplies, a proceeding injurious to his pride. A wagon would simply draw up at his door while he was away, deliver the supplies and drive away. When the working man returned at night he would find that he was several dollars better off. Nothing was said to him either way, but when election time came he was apt to remember the favor.

The Republicans on the other hand were always reminding the colored voter that they were in debt to them for the emancipation of the slaves. The young negro voter was inclined to repudiate the debt to a large extent, as the State of New York had gone Democratic since the war, and because Tammany Hall sent out some of the best regiments that went to the war.

BRIDGES.

In New York everything looks so much like its picture. This is the comment the small boy made when he first saw a lion. The statue of Liberty enlightening the world is very familiar to the man who has never seen it before. The Brooklyn Bridge is like its pictures. As you cross the bridge you see great posters of the New York Journal declaring that the

bridge is not liable to fall down as had been alleged by a corrupt press for electioneering purposes. This does not have the reassuring effect that is intended. It only reminds you that the safety of the bridge is a debatable question but you take comfort in the fact that it has not fallen down recently.

There is a new bridge going up above the Brooklyn Bridge to connect Brooklyn at another place with New York, which will be done in about two years. The cables only are stretched between the towers. We saw an old man gazing at the new bridge, which stands outlined against the sky. He reached out a venerable paw and took me by the sleeve, and said: "I wouldn't like to cross that bridge, would you?" I said "Now!" and pushed on rudely, which is proper street manners in New York. In the South you might have explained to the old man that there was to be a road way hung on those cables and the bridge was not done, in a sunny, kindly way, but such a course in New York would be regarded as softening of the brain.

GALLANTRY.

In New York the person who first gets a seat in a car keeps it and if the car fills up and the late comers are women they hang on to the straps and listen to the conductor to mumble "hold-fast" when the car takes a curve. Now we had often heard of this way of doing and supposed the men were entirely to blame for holding down the seats in which they found themselves, but it is not so. A fair damsel will climb into a car and see that it is full in the twinkling of an eye. She will grab a strap and immediately turn her eyes and, her thoughts, to Heaven, and fall into a fit of abstraction and appears to be perfectly oblivious that there are birds or originates in some other way.

AT POINT PLEASANT.

The exercises commemorating the 127th anniversary of the Battle of Point Pleasant on October 10, 1901 are described as being very interesting.

The remains of Ann Bailey, more familiarly known as "Mad Ann" had been taken from their long resting place in Gallia county, Ohio, and were brought to Point Pleasant and reinterred with imposing ceremonies near the place she used to live. Her record appears in history as the foremost woman scout, sharp shooter and Indian fighter that ever lived in America.

In 1874 the centennial anniversary was celebrated, and one of its features was to gather up all that could be found "in the reservation" of those who had fallen in the battle, bury them in the court house lawn and erect a monument.

This however was so opposed by the aged sires present that the remains were placed in metallic cases and reburied in the "reservation." This spot, having been purchased, was formally set apart at the recent anniversary for the erection of a monument in honor of those who fought and died here October 10, 1774.

Seventy five Virginians died in that conflict, among them Col. Charles Lewis and Col. Charles Fields. The loss of the Indians never was precisely ascertained.

The other hand the novice is apt to get into a panic when he finds that he is lost and may start to running at the top of his speed, or sit still in one place, until he is crazed and perishes miserably in the woods. The experienced hunter when he realizes that he is lost sits down and collects his thoughts and determines on a course. This he keeps by following a stream or otherwise, knowing that a straight course must bring him to some habitation. The danger is in traveling in circles.

The number present at the late celebration is estimated at ten thousand. The decorations were very elaborate, illustrating the patriotic spirit enthusing the people of Point Pleasant and the adjacent communities. There was a grand parade with Cornstalk's boat, wigwams, and other objects reminders of pioneer days, when the Indians roamed the primitive forests. All of which lent interest to no little extent to the occasion.

When the battle was fought it seemed to be a mere war between the savages and the Virginians, but the events which followed in quick succession demonstrate this battle to have been a conflict of a far more serious and important character. In reality it proved to have been the opening battle of the Revolution, planned by Lord Dunmore, the partisan Tory Colonial Governor, the design being to quench in blood the spirit of liberty and thus render futile any immediate effort on the part of the colonies to make good their rights in the controversy then fermenting between the patriots and the mother country.

However base and treacherous were the intentions of Lord Dunmore, it pleased the God of Battles in His Wisdom to have all these intentions thwarted by the liberty loving Virginians. How aptly the events of that memorable Monday, October 10, 1774, emphasize the beautiful thrilling sentiment of these lines:

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again."

The eternal years of God are hers.

While error wounded writhes in pain,

And dies amid her worshippers,"

W. T. P.

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